



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION ANNOUNCED
TODAY THAT THE INVESTIGATION OF THE SHOOTING DEATH OF
SOPHIA KING BY AN AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT OFFICER HAS BEEN
CLOSED**

The United States Attorney's Office for the Western District of Texas and the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice announced today that there was insufficient evidence to support federal criminal civil rights charges against an Austin Police Department Officer in the shooting death of Sophia King on June 11, 2002.

The Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, the United States Attorney's Office, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) conducted an independent investigation and carefully considered all the evidence. We have determined, however, that this matter does not involve a violation of federal criminal civil rights statutes.

As part of our investigation, we obtained the Austin Police Department (APD) investigative file, which included the APD incident reports, witness statements, autopsy report, photographs, evidence records, and forensic evidence analysis. We also obtained the report detailing the independent investigation of the incident by a Dallas law firm and interviewed the Police Monitor for the City of Austin.

In order to prove a violation of the applicable federal criminal civil rights laws, prosecutors must establish beyond a reasonable doubt that a law enforcement officer willfully deprived an individual of a Constitutional right. To act "willfully" for purposes of the federal statute means to act with a bad purpose to disobey or disregard the law. Accident, mistake, fear or bad judgment is not sufficient to establish such a criminal violation.

Here, the government could not prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the victim's death was the result of more force than was reasonably necessary. The available testimonial and physical evidence is insufficient to prove, beyond a reasonable doubt, a willful violation of the applicable federal criminal civil rights statute. Accordingly, we are closing this matter.

The United States Attorney's Office and the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice stand ready to ensure that all allegations of serious civil rights violations are fully and completely investigated. Indeed, since 2001, we have brought more than 250 prosecutions against law enforcement officers across the country for civil rights violations, convicting 261 officers. We have prosecuted, and will continue to aggressively prosecute, criminal civil rights violations whenever the evidence developed in these investigations warrants doing so.